

**BAY DELTA CONSERVATION PLAN
CONSERVATION STRATEGY FRAMEWORK
OVERVIEW
October 16, 2007 Draft**

This document presents an overview of a proposed framework for the conservation strategy approach which the Steering Committee will carry forward into the planning processes under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act (NCCPA). The framework will identify key elements of a successful conservation strategy for the Delta, including the means of conveying water over the long term that would most likely advance the BDCP's planning goals. The framework will also describe the process and methodologies used to arrive at those key elements and the proposed conservation strategy approach. Specifically, the framework will include the following:

1. Description of the Conservation Strategy Approach. The Steering Committee will build upon, modify, or refine existing options into a conservation strategy approach that will be used to develop the Bay/Delta Conservation Plan. The framework will describe the conservation strategy approach proposed by the Steering Committee, including its overall approach to water conveyance and the opportunities for restoration projects.
2. Development of the Conservation Strategy Approach.
 - a. Process - The framework will summarize the process used by the Steering Committee to settle upon a conservation strategy approach. This summary will both recap the process leading up to the evaluation of options as well as the steps taken by the Steering Committee to reach consensus.
 - b. Information used - The framework will discuss the information, analysis, and assumptions that factored into the selection of a conservation strategy approach, such as new reports, studies, and modeling results as well as the guidance from the independent science advisors.
 - c. Rationale - The framework will detail the rationale for the conservation strategy approach. Through the Steering Committee's consideration of the four options, a greater understanding emerged of the opportunities and shortcomings associated with each of the options that were analyzed in the development of the conservation strategy approach.
3. Role of the Conservation Strategy Framework in the Development of the BDCP.
 - a. What it is – The framework will discuss how the conservation strategy approach will be used to inform the development of the BDCP's overall conservation plan and specific conservation actions for the Delta. In addition, the framework will describe the role of the preferred approach to water conveyance in the conservation planning process and how it will be addressed in the BDCP.
 - b. What it is not - The framework document will discuss how it and the options evaluation leading up to it are not intended to serve as an analysis of alternatives pursuant to the requirements of state and federal endangered species laws and environmental review processes under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Rather, the purpose of the evaluation and framework is to help inform the Steering Committee as it crafts a proposed approach for the BDCP and begins to develop the plan.
4. Information Needs for the BDCP Planning Process ahead. The Steering Committee will identify certain informational needs and areas of uncertainty as it develops the conservation strategy approach into a Conservation Plan. The framework will memorialize those apparent needs and uncertainties to ensure that they are addressed in the conservation planning process for the BDCP.
5. Next Steps. The framework will include information on future activities and timelines related to the development of the BDCP, including the environmental review process under NEPA and CEQA.